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ABSTRACT

A survey of members of the Association for Education in Journalism secondary school division was taken to learn their recommendations for high school journalism courses and teacher certification requirements. Thirty-nine of 51 members replied. They recommended that a journalism minor and professional experience, in addition to teaching, be the minimum preparation for teaching journalism. Core courses in a journalism minor should include a survey of mass communication, news writing, copy editing, and newspaper make-up. Additionally, a teacher's education should include another primary teaching area along with some courses in radio/television and English. A secondary school should offer four semesters of journalism, including a one-semester course in the mass media. The courses should stress journalistic writing and analysis of the mass media more than the actual production of a high school publication. A news bureau staffed by students also is a good idea if the school administration allows adequate released time and compensation for supervising it. (JK)

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SUGGESTED HIGH SCHOOL JOURNALISM COURSES AND TEACHER CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS (BASED ON A SURVEY OF THE AEJ SECONDARY SCHOOL DIVISION MEMBERS)*

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SUGGESTED HIGH SCHOOL JOURNALISM COURSES

AND TEACHER CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

(BASED ON A SURVEY OF THE AEJ SECONDARY SCHOOL DIVISION MEMBERS)

School publications, traditionally the major activity of high school journalism programs, remain a key factor, but educating students to be effective users of all the mass media is the primary function in the 1970's, according to a survey of the Association for Education in Journalism Secondary School Division.

The survey asked all 51 division members to indicate what should be required of prospective journalism teachers, what should be taught in high school journalism classes, and what college journalism courses are most essential in preparing persons to teach high school journalism. Thirty-nine replied, or 76 per cent of the sample.

Observing the scene in general, Dr. Louis E. Ingelhart of Ball State University commented, "Schools are discovering responsible school publications come from intelligent students taught by a skilled teacher," and Dr. Robert P. Knight of the University of Missouri noted that a high school journalism teacher "should have a background in journalism plus a desire to teach the course. I feel that the desire or motivation is perhaps the most important characteristic of the good journalism teacher."

"Much of what we are attempting to do now at the college level in building skills can and should be accomplished before the kids get to higher education," said Robert Tottingham of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. "This would enable schools and departments to stress non-skill areas critical to the moulding of sensitive, informed, socially conscious, in-depth-oriented professional communicators. I think that secondary schools should be taken into partnership by higher education interests in the above regard. To me this means colleges

must focus on development of more highly qualified high school journalism and media teachers for secondary school work."

Tottingham believes that one way this development could occur would be by "AEJ's opening its doors to affiliation by qualified persons at the secondary school level. Today, I'm concerned that college journalism and mass communication educators have 'walled themselves off' from a vitally concerned, motivated and professionally capable people with whom and for whom they should be working to make the entire field of mass communication instruction more acceptable and useful."

I. RECOMMENDED HIGH SCHOOL JOURNALISM PROGRAMS.

Purposes.

Almost all of the respondents agreed that the main purpose of high school journalism is to help make high school students intelligent consumers of the mass media. Also ranking high are teaching fact-gathering techniques, teaching factual or narrative writing, and developing the writing ability of good students of English. Secondary purposes are publishing yearbooks and magazines, teaching professional journalism principles, and writing news stories about the school for local media.

Several of the members wrote that the primary purpose of many high school journalism classes has been to publish and edit the school newspaper, yearbook, or magazine; but Knight saw this only as a means for students to learn the subject. Publications alone cannot justify a high school journalism course, he added.

TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

Courses.

The respondents as a group preferred schools' offering a minimum of two full years of high school journalism including a one semester course about the mass media. Most of the members felt that a first or second semester journalism course should be open mainly to 9th and 10th graders, while the next two semesters of journalism should be available only to 11th and 12th graders. Almost everyone agreed that a course in mass media should not have a grade restriction placed on it.

For the two suggested years of high school journalism courses, two basic patterns emerged. One places primary emphasis on the analysis of the mass media and the various forms of journalistic writing and the second gives importance to preparation of a student publication.

News Bureau.

More than 75 per cent of the respondents believed that a high school should have a news bureau staffed by students. Many respondents wrote that it would have educational value to both the school and the community if it has the proper faculty supervision. T. Jan Wiseman of Kishwaukee College replied that such an operation would give high school students good practical experience by forcing them to write for different audiences.

Dr. Russell J. Jandoli of St. Bonaventure University said that a news bureau staffed by high school students could "provide quasi-professional practice and expose student work to the market place." Additionally, it could serve other functions, Jandoli suggested, such as providing a contact with the professional field and keeping student journalists informed of official activity. All these things, he added, could lead to a possible journalism vocation.

One of the stronger replies concerning the need for a high school news bureau staffed by students came from Dr. Arthur M. Sanderson of the University of Florida:

Such a project should work well in most high schools, providing that responsibility and supervision is lodged with the journalism teacher; probably the copy should go to the principal for clearance and distribution (certainly, at least, for information and for coordination). School activities need to be disseminated to the public, and liaison maintained with the professional press and their education editors or reporters, as well as with sports editors or "rep editors."

The concept and operation of a "News Bureau" needs to be broadened, however. Information or "press releases" or telephone calls to the media are only a part of the program, in my opinion. What is needed is a "Public Relations Bureau," of which the News Bureau may be a part. In other words, spot news and announcements serve a useful purpose, but the concept should be made much broader. Announcement of the cast of a school play or the date of the annual spring band concert is only a small part of providing the public what it needs to know.

Aside from such backgrounders, interpretive articles, news stories, and the like, a Public Relations Bureau can engage in community activities. A school chorus, or drama group, or speakers, or programs can be made available to civic clubs, community centers, churches, and other groups. Films, slides, tapes can be prepared for showing on radio or television.

Students can partake in all these activities as part of a Public Relations Bureau in a high school. It is a better program than a "news bureau" which in itself is only a part of a much broader concept.

Arguing against a news bureau staffed by students, Peter C. Lang of Fresno City College said that high school students are not good enough to handle a high school news bureau position. Another respondent from Commerce, Texas, felt that a news bureau is sometimes helpful, but it takes too much of a teacher's time.

Mrs. Dolores F. Spurgeon of San Jose State College replied that it is too difficult in a student staff news bureau to track down responsibility for any story and to get the necessary story revisions. Dr. Gene Gilmore of the University of Illinois wrote that "it tends to stuff local papers with a lot of trivia."

Requirements to Enroll in High School Journalism.

In specifying qualifications required of a high school student to enroll in journalism, more than 60 per cent of the respondents felt that typing was the most important skill, but they also almost all replied that journalism should be open to all students of the appropriate grade level as shown in Table 4.

Most of the respondents who indicated that secondary school teachers should have a master's degree also replied that a high school student needed a B average in English and a C average overall before enrolling in journalism.

TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

Most of the respondents felt that the present high school journalism textbooks are inadequate and superficial. Many mentioned that a need exists for a good high school text about the mass media.

II. RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND FOR HIGH SCHOOL JOURNALISM TEACHERS

Most respondents felt that journalism teachers need college student publications and professional experiences, adequate journalism course training, and background in both radio-TV and English. More than half of the members believed that secondary school journalism teachers should have at least a master's degree with a journalism major or minor.

About 78 per cent or 29 members reported that an undergraduate journalism major is the preferred undergraduate major for secondary school journalism teachers. One other person indicated the major should be in mass communication, while six mentioned that an English major would be appropriate.

Several members indicated two or three undergraduate major choices for future high school journalism teachers, but almost all agreed that a journalism minor

was needed if the major was not journalism. Other members recommending a journalism major felt that a minor in almost any area would be suitable with a journalism major.

In commenting on an undergraduate teaching major, a division member from Tennessee said that there are too few high schools in which a teacher could have a full load of journalism classes. He, therefore, suggested that a person seek certification in a primary subject area such as English and a minor in journalism since most students do not have enough elective hours in their undergraduate school program to take journalism courses merely as electives.

More than half of the respondents agreed that a secondary teacher should have a master's degree. Richard A. Rollins of the University of Tennessee felt that if a teacher had chosen English as his undergraduate major for primary certification, he then should obtain a master's degree. A masters degree is becoming a necessary requirement, said Rollins, for classroom teaching in subjects such as English and social studies, but a masters degree isn't necessary for a journalism teacher to do a good job.

Lang strongly opposed the establishment of a master's degree as the "sine qua non to teach on either the high school or the junior college level. Pressures in this direction represent to me an extension of the 'Ph. D. syndrome.'"

Members generally agreed that high school journalism teachers need competence, besides journalism, primarily in the fields of English (43.7%) and radio-TV (29.4%), with speech a distinct third (.093%).

Nearly 70 per cent of the division's members recommend minimum college coursework requirement of a journalism minor or greater. Four persons felt that high school journalism teachers need a minimum of 36 semester hours to teach journalism courses, while only three felt that people having fewer than nine semester hours in journalism would be acceptable.

TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

Preferred Courses.

College journalism courses in copy editing, news writing, mass communication, and newspaper make-up were rated the most essential for a future secondary school journalism teacher, while journalism research and principles of public relations were rated the least essential. Individual members reported that courses in supervising student publications, social impact of mass communication, film, magazine editing and layout, and copywriting were also highly essential.

TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

Respondents suggesting that secondary school teachers need a master's degree tended to rate courses in news writing and mass communication much higher than persons indicating their preference against a required master's degree. Rather these people against a master's degree tended to assess newspaper make-up and radio-TV news writing much higher.

In evaluating these courses, Sanderson said, "I must rate news writing, copy editing, and newspaper makeup fairly high because I am practical enough to know that at present most teacher-education students will be required to teach these areas. Editorial writing and feature writing are most useful not only for journalism students, but for any student or teacher interested in creative expression."

He also felt his course ratings might have been different "if more high school journalism courses were truly journalism courses instead of class hours devoted to writing for and producing the school newspaper and yearbook."

Compensation.

Almost 90 per cent of the respondents believed that a high school publications adviser should receive specific or extra compensation for advising student publications.

Elwood Karwand of Wisconsin State University at Eau Claire commented, "If this is a professional responsibility, it should receive professional compensation -- certainly the journalism class should not be used to produce the student publication."

James F. Paschal of the University of Oklahoma believed that one reason for such turnover of journalism teachers every year is the result of inadequate compensation.

Robert L. LaConto of Northern Illinois University believes in extra compensation "if advising must be done above and beyond the normal teacher workload." He added that no compensation for an adviser is necessary if adequate released time is given.

III. SUMMARY

These findings suggest that the members of the secondary school division of AEJ believe that a journalism minor and some professional experience, besides teaching, provides minimum preparation for a person to be a high school journalism teacher. Core courses in a journalism minor should include a survey of mass communication, news writing, copy editing, and newspaper make-up. Additionally, a teacher's education should include another primary teaching area along with some courses in radio-TV and English.

Four semesters of high school journalism, according to the respondents, including a one semester course in the mass media, should be taught in a

secondary school. These courses should stress journalistic writing and analysis of the mass media more than the actual production of a high school publication. A news bureau staffed by students also belongs in a high school journalism program, if the school administration allows adequate released time and compensation for supervising such an operation.

TABLE 1

Comparison of the Primary, Secondary, and the Not Applicable Purposes of Journalism in the High School

	Primary	Secondary	Not Applicable	
Help make students intelligent consumers of the mass media	89.7	10.3	.0	(N=39)
Teach professional journalism in case students enter it later.	22.2	63.9	13.9	(N=36)
Give poor students of English something easy to take. . .	.0	.0	100.0	(N=39)
Reward good students of English with something challenging to take.	15.4	56.4	28.2	(N=39)
Write news stories about the high school and its student for the local mass media. .	5.1	84.6	10.3	(N=39)
Edit and publish the school newspaper	56.4	30.8	12.8	(N=39)
Teach factual or narrative writing	63.	23.7	13.1	(N=38)
Edit and publish the school yearbook.	24.3	59.5	16.2	(N=37)
Develop the writing ability of of good students of English	59.0	30.8	10.2	(N=39)
Edit and publish the school magazine.	23.7	57.9	18.4	(N=38)
Teach fact-gathering techniques.	89.7	7.7	2.6	(N=39)
Give good students of English something easy to take. . .	.0	.0	100.0	(N=38)

TABLE 2

Requirements for Students
to Enroll in High School Journalism

	Yes	No	
Must be able to type.	67.6	32.4	(N=37)
Must have a B average in English and a C average overall	51.6	48.4	(N=31)
Must have at least a B average in English.	40.0	60.0	(N=25)
Must have at least a B average overall	23.1	76.9	(N=26)
Must have at least a C average overall	61.5	38.5	(N=26)
Must be selected by a journalism teacher or other professional . .	41.9	58.1	(N=31)
Restricted mainly to vocational and/or special education students	6.7	93.3	(N=30)
Open to all students of the appropriate grade level.	65.6	34.4	(N=32)

TABLE 3

Minimum Number of Journalism Credit Hours that should be Required to be Eligible to Teach High School Journalismq

Suggested Hours Needed		Suggested Hours Needed	
36 semester hours. . .	13.2	9 semester hours. . . .	18.4
24 semester hours. . .	7.9	Less than 9 semester hours . .	7.9
20 semester hours. . .	39.5	No basis for judging. .	5.2
Journallism minor. . .	7.9	Total . . .	100.0
		(N is 38)	

TABLE 4

Percentage and Mean Score of College Journalism Courses

Suggested for High School Journalism Teachers

	Percentages								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		Mean Score
Copy Editing	0.0	2.56	0.0	2.56	7.69	10.26	76.92	(N=39)	6.5
News Writing	2.56	2.56	2.56	2.56	2.56	5.13	82.05	(N=39)	6.4
Mass Communication and Society	0.0	0.0	5.41	0.0	16.22	21.62	52.76	(N=37)	6.2
Newspaper Makeup	0.0	0.0	5.26	2.63	21.05	13.16	57.89	(N=38)	6.2
Feature Writing	0.0	2.70	0.0	18.92	16.22	45.95	0.0	(N=37)	5.8
Photography	0.0	0.0	10.53	7.89	23.68	26.32	31.58	(N=38)	5.7
Editorial Writing	5.26	5.26	7.89	15.79	21.05	23.68	21.05	(N=38)	5.0
Journalism Law	2.63	5.26	5.26	21.05	28.95	28.95	18.42	(N=38)	5.0
Production Techniques	5.13	2.56	15.38	12.82	20.51	12.82	30.77	(N=39)	5.0
Typography & Graphics	7.89	2.63	5.26	21.05	23.68	21.05	18.42	(N=38)	4.9
Journalism History	2.56	5.13	10.26	30.77	23.08	20.51	7.69	(N=39)	4.6
School Yearbook Procedures	5.26	10.53	10.53	13.16	28.95	15.79	15.79	(N=38)	4.6
Advertising Layout	5.26	7.89	18.42	26.32	15.79	18.42	7.89	(N=38)	4.3
Radio-TV News Writing	7.89	2.63	18.42	28.95	18.42	7.89	15.79	(N=38)	4.3
Principles of Advertising	5.13	10.26	12.82	35.90	12.82	17.95	5.13	(N=39)	3.9
Principles of Public Relations	5.13	15.38	17.95	28.21	15.38	12.82	5.13	(N=39)	3.9
Journalism Research Techniques	29.73	24.32	18.92	8.11	8.11	0.0	10.81	(N=37)	2.8

Respondents rated each course from 1, highly unessential, to 7, highly essential. Figures are percentages of those responding making each rating. When there are 38 respondents, each equals 2.63 per cent.

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLE

College Journalism Courses Recommended for High School Journalism Teachers

Each course was rated from 1, highly unessential, to 7, highly essential. Medians and ranks based on medians are reported below:

Rank	Course	Median Score
1	News Writing	6.89
2	Copy Editing	6.85
3	Newspaper Makeup	6.64
4	Mass Communication and Society	6.62
5	Photography	5.80
6	Journalism Law	5.41
7.5	Feature Writing	5.25
7.5	Editorial Writing	5.25
9	Production Techniques	5.10
10	Typography and Graphics	5.06
11	School Yearbook Procedures	4.86
12	Journalism History	4.56
13	Radio-TV News Writing	4.23
14	Advertising Layout	4.20
15	Principles of Advertising	4.10
16	Principles of Public Relations	3.91
17	Journalism Research Techniques	2.33